

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ABIDJA 04286 311527Z

70

ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03

SS-20 USIA-15 CU-04 PC-04 DRC-01 /127 W

----- 103420

R 311447Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8677

INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY PARIS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ABIDJAN 4286

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OGEN, IV

SUBJECT: IVORIAN TO HEAD UNIVERSITY

1. IVORY COAST WILL END A RATHER BLATANT SYMBOL OF FRENCH PRESENCE ON OCTOBER 1 AS A RESULT OF AN ANNOUNCEMENT FOLLOWING A COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING MAY 30 THAT THE FRENCH RECTOR OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ABIDJAN WILL BE REPLACED ON THAT DATE BY CHARLES VALY DIARRASSOUBA.

WITH ALL THE NECESSARY ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS, HE IS CURRENTLY DEAN OF THE ECONOMIC SCIENCES FACULTY AND IS WELL RESPECTED AS BOTH AN ADMINISTRATOR AND AN ACADEMICIAN.

2. IVORIANS WITH WHOM WE HAVE SPOKEN SINCE THE ANNOUNCEMENT HAVE GENERALLY BREATHED A SIGH OF RELIEF THAT THE ACTION IS FINALLY TO TAKE PLACE. THE POSITION OF RECTOR AT THE COUNTRY'S ONE UNIVERSITY IS A FAIRLY VISIBLE ONE, PARTICULARLY CONSIDERING THE NUMBER OF CONFERENCES IN WHICH THE UNIVERSITY IS INVOLVED HERE AND OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY. IT WAS GALLING ESPECIALLY TO THE YOUNGER GENERATION OF IVORIANS THAT THE RECTOR WAS A FRENCHMAN, NO MATTER WHAT HIS QUALIFICATIONS, AND THERE HAS BEEN A FEELING FOR SOME TIME (HELPED ALONG BY SENEGAL'S ACTION IN NAMING A SENEGALESE AS ITS UNIVERSITY HEAD) THAT THE MOMENT WAS OVERDUE

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FOR THE PRESTIGIOUS POSITION TO BE IN THE HANDS OF A NATIONAL.

THUS THE GOIC IS TAKING A POPULAR STEP AND ELIMINATING THE SOURCE
OF POSSIBLE EMBARRASSMENT LATER (AS IN MADAGASCAR SEVERAL YEARS
AGO) OVER DEMANDS TO TAKE THE UNIVERSITY OUT OF FRENCH HANDS.
SMITH

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NNN

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